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Equally important contributions are made by Mr. King to the linguistic side of Assyriology in the discussion of words and phrases like the long note on the months (Vol. III, note 3). But we must close, as we began, with hearty commendation and grateful appreciation of the admirable service rendered by the author alike to the historian and philologist, both of whom will carry away from these volumes abundant spoil, while the student who is not a specialist will find in the attractive discussions and the excellent translations of the third volume much instructive information upon a memorable era in the history of the ancient world.

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BABYLONIAN AND ASSYRIAN LIFE.¹

This is the best book Professor Sayce has yet written, and displays a caution and a care for facts that are very refreshing. It has a distinct value for the student as giving in an English dress what might take up much time to find in German publications. The work will serve to familiarize a reader of Assyrian or Babylonian contracts with the problems which will meet him in his attempts to understand them. It gives in a clear and lucid form the results which have hitherto been reached. The popular reader or "man in the railway carriage" will miss "the purple patches" of "lower criticism;" but sober thinkers will find much to please them.

The contract "literature," letters, and even some religious texts are laid under contribution for facts, suggestions, and illustrations. For the most part the renderings of the original texts used as authorities seem to seize the essential points of the sentence and give it the desired complexion. Considerable dissent would be expressed by those who have made a special study of the subject, except, of course, where the author simply follows Oppert, Peiser, or Pinches; where these pioneers have failed the author has rarely improved matters. Probably it is outside the plan of the series to give references to quotations, but the reviewer has found it difficult to track some of the texts to their source. The hope raised by the footnote on p. 1, giving the authority for the statement that ninety feet are annually added to the coast line of the Persian Gulf, is crushed by the almost total absence of others. On p. 2 a curious piece of arithmetic meets us: the rate of deposit being taken as 100 feet per annum, a deposit of 130 miles is held to carry back a date to B. C. 6500, instead of about B. C. 4900. The earlier date requires only eighty feet a year.

In many cases very stale theories are retained on slender grounds. That Sennacherib made a very handsome present to Esarhaddon, apparently on taking rank as crown prince and receiving a change of name in honor of the occasion, is no ground for assuming any favoritism.

¹ BABYLONIANS AND ASSYRIANS. *Life and Customs.* By Rev. A. H. Sayce, Professor of Assyriology at Oxford. London: J. C. Nimmo; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899. x + 286 pp. (= "The Semitic Series," edited by J. A. Craig; Vol. VI.)

Winckler's view of the whole relations of Esarhaddon to Sennacherib and the parricide is much better in accord with facts. The elaboration of the account of the educational systems is overdone, and the contrast between the Assyrians and Babylonians is unfair to the former. The proof that most Babylonians could write, and only few Assyrians, relies on the absence of seals or prevalence of nail-marks. But the possession of a seal is no proof of ability to write, nor the use of a nail-mark any argument for illiteracy. What the author needs to show is that witnesses signed their names—that is, wrote them—in Babylonia, but had them written by others in Assyria. The author is much nearer the mark when he says that the preponderance of magical texts, omens, and portents, in the Ninevite collections, is an accident, due to the king's private taste. The so-called library of Ashurbanipal is a very fortuitous collection and cannot be made a basis for generalizations as to the contents of other libraries.

Many curious statements are made in an unguarded way, and no attempt appears in language or type to distinguish between facts and the author's impressions. Thus, when we read that "the value of land was proportionate to that of house property," we expect so definite a statement to be followed by an attempt to fix the proportion, or at least exemplify its existence. In fact, the assertion probably means only that, compared with modern prices, land was as cheap as houses—a rather superfluous observation. So, too, George Smith, as long ago as 1872, disposed of the idea that the fines mentioned in contracts could be used to determine a gold-silver ratio of value. That gold was worth ten times as much as silver may or may not be true; it certainly cannot be deduced from the data given on p. 125. The statement is several times made that in early times payments were made in grain. This was certainly the case in primitive days, but whether we have any trace of that usage is a matter for proof. A payment in *oil* scarcely proves the point, p. 144.

The Babylonians seem to have carried conjuring to a high pitch of excellence, if we are to believe that in the eleventh year of Nabonidus a gentleman called Nebo-edhernapisti was persuaded into believing that he had received one shekel of gold in *five-shekel pieces*. How was it done? This gentleman's name raises a point that is continually irritating the reader. The author has peculiar ideas on the correct method of transliterating Assyrian or Babylonian characters, to which he is welcome. But he persists in half translating his names. Nebo is not a transliteration of the original Nabû, but the rest of the name is only transliterated. Why not give the Hebrew or Arabic transliterations of *napištu* as well? So Merodach Baladan is fair enough, but Merodach-apal-iddina is a hybrid. So Samas sometimes appears as Saul, with no warning that they are the same divine name. The *S* in Samas is rendered by the same letter as the *S* in Sin.

Despite the uncertainty as to the sources from which some quotations come, we may conjecture them in one or two cases. Thus, on p. 175, the amounts of tribute received from Carchemish, Arpad, Megiddo, seem to

be taken from II R. 53, No. 3, and those credited to Nineveh and Aššur from II R. 53, No. 2. But, if so, there are several unwarranted statements also made. Disregarding the assumption that this was in the time of Sennacherib, there is no proof that this tribute was "annual," nor that it was "expended on the maintenance of the fleet," nor that the total revenue was "274 talents." The author further omits to notice that in No. 2 the talents were of wool or woollen stuff, and that in l. 2 there is no mention of Aššur at all.

There are some mistakes in expression that are scarcely likely to mislead the reader, and may be misprints, of which there are plenty, due, doubtless, to printing at a distance. Thus, on p. 157, we read that gold was worth eleven times *more* than silver, when eleven times *as much* is intended. The Babylonians must have early become acquainted with the idea of a fourth dimension, if, as appears on p. 187, they could speak of a property as "twenty acres by thirteen."

As stated in the appendix, p. 265, the scale of measures, so important in a work of this description, is based on Dr. Oppert's researches. This was perhaps unavoidable without a preliminary chapter on the subject; but the results are naturally very quaint and at times disturb the author's complacency. Thus, while a Greek was content with a quart of wheat a day, a Babylonian slave had twice as much, p. 141.

In the chapter on religion Professor Sayce seems more at home with his facts, but the subject more easily lends itself to speculation, and perhaps dogmatic statements are more allowable. But that these ancient worshippers of God thought of him as the author suggests is very questionable, and any suggestion as to the real significance of much that they said is premature. One can only express a general sense of distrust in this book as a guide. When we begin to draw comparisons in detail between Assyrian and other Semitic religions, we are on surer ground. As Professor Sayce says, the general character is very similar. But his further statement that "in details it resembles the religions of the other Semitic nations of western Asia only in so far as they have been influenced by it," will surely be denied. Assyria or Babylonia may have borrowed more than the author admits, or two nations may have developed their ideas on parallel lines.

The book is a distinct contribution to the literature of the subject and is very pleasant to read. But care must be taken not to use any statement without careful examinations of the reasons given, if any, and, further, the original texts should be consulted if they can be found.

It was scarcely to be expected that reasons should be exhibited for the renderings given to Assyrian words, much less ideograms. This makes it very difficult to discuss the translations, as many sources of knowledge must be open to the author which a reviewer would not suspect. One rendering seems a perfect gem in its way and may serve to illustrate the reviewer's perplexities. An official who frequently appears in Assyrian documents bears a title written (amêl) LU-PA-MEŠ. As LU is the ideogram for šabātu, and PA for appatu,

one expects to read the title *ṣābit appâte*, which is literally "holder of the reins." This official was properly the "chariot-driver." But Professor Sayce, on p. 80, renders the title "bear-hunter." Is it possible he reads LU as *dip* and connects *dippa* with *dabû*, "a bear"? One almost feels ashamed to suggest the idea, but suspicion is not easily allayed.

C. H. W. JOHNS.

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EARLY BABYLONIAN HISTORY.¹

This book is the outgrowth of a doctor's dissertation presented to Columbia University in April, 1898. In adding this to the many discussions of this period which have appeared within the last fifteen years, the author has the following points especially in view: (1) "To arrange as far as possible the kings of the different dynasties so far as known to us according to a certain chronological order." (2) To transcribe and translate—where possible—all texts not found in *KB.*, III, 1. "By doing this I thought to help not only the historian, but also beginners in the study of Sumerian inscriptions, of whom I am first and foremost." In this he acknowledges his indebtedness mainly to the works of Jensen, Hilprecht, and Thureau-Dangin; also to Brünnow and Delitzsch. (3) To cite under the discussion of each king all the known, published literature of that ruler. (4) To presume some knowledge of the grammar of the "Sumerian language" by the reader of the volume. (5) "To avoid deductions from the inscriptions as far as possible," for each reader can do this for himself. (6) "To avoid all legendary matter." The preface also contains a note, which would much better have been added at an appropriate place in the book, on the pronunciation of *Šir-pur-la-ki* as found in the short form in *Gudea Cyl. B.*, v, 22, where we find *Šir-pur-ki*. From this single example he says: "Hence this much only can we say: the sign for Pur had in all probability also the value of Pul."

The general plan of the book may be indicated before we examine its parts in detail. The introduction is an elaborate discussion (in 43 pages) of the chronology of this period of history, with an arrangement of the rulers of each city and dynasty. This is followed in succession by a treatment of the "Lord of Kengi" (4 pp.), "Rulers of Shirpurla" (75 pp.), "Kings of Kish and Gishban" (29 pp.), "The First Dynasty of Ur" (3 pp.), "The Patesis between Lummadur and Ur-Ba'u" (1 p.), "Kings of Agade" (21 pp.), "The Kings of Guti and Lulubi" (5 pp.), "The so-called Later Patesis of Shirpurla" (34 pp.), "The Second Dynasty of Ur" (10 pp.), "Kings of Erech" (3 pp.), "Kings of Isin"

¹ *EARLY BABYLONIAN HISTORY: down to the End of the Fourth Dynasty of Ur; to which is appended an account of "The E. A. Hoffman Collection" of Babylonian Tablets in the General Theological Seminary, New York, U. S. A.* By Rev. Hugo Radau, A.M., B.D., Ph.D., Mayo Fellow in the General Theological Seminary. New York: *Oxford University Press*, 1900. xx+452 pp.